

Thinking about your first . . .



# Dachshund?

By Peyton M. Creadick.

Libby is an atypical but photogenic miniature smooth red sable dachshund.

**L**ibby may look a little like a Chihuahua with her protruding eyes and high forehead, but she's Dachshund through and through! She's feisty, sturdy, likes to bark, bold, curious, and very clever. She's so stubborn sometimes people mistake her for being a little dense. I, on the other hand, think it's a trick. She's a clever one. Dachshunds like to train their owners rather than being trained themselves!

## History

Dachshunds were bred to hunt badgers. In fact, "DACHS" means badger in German. Hund means dog or hound. Basically, a Dachshund is a Badger Dog. Libby is actually considered a *miniature* dachshund. To hunt Badgers, the Dachshund had to be strong and scent-oriented. They are, in fact, scent hounds. These muscular little dogs also had to be long and narrow if they were going to chase an animal down into its hole or burrow. Miniature dachshunds were bred to hunt smaller animals but the name dachshund stuck! Rumor has it that the Chihuahua was bred into the Dachshund line to decrease the size of the dogs.

## Statii

- ♥ **Height:** 5 to 9 inches
- ♥ **Weight** 8-30 lbs (Minatures are classified as 11 lbs and under)
- ♥ **Coat Types:** 3 (smooth, wire hair, long hair)
- ♥ **Coat colors:** red, black and tan, chocolate and tan, blue and tan, Isabella and tan, cream, wheaten (wire hair), wild boar (wire hair), red boar (wire hair), brindle,
- ♥ **Patterns:** brindle, dapple, double dapple (potentially crippling birth defects associated with this pattern), piebald, and sable.

## Care and Maintenance

**Basics:** Dachshunds must have readily available water at all times, quality food, toys, somewhere comfortable to sleep, regular tooth brushing (those later dental visits will be costly if you don't maintain their teeth). They require very little grooming and shed very little. Dachshunds do not require a yard but will appreciate one.

**Training.** Obedience classes will help you *and* your puppy to understand the rules of the game.

**Annual vaccinations.** These aren't just good practice, they're the law. They also need monthly heartworm protection. Heartworm is a slow and painful killer.

**Toys!** If it doesn't have its own toys, your dog will make toys out of your furniture, other pets, bedding, etc. It's up to you to determine what toys your dachshund likes best. Your puppy will most likely show you.

**Exercise.** Dachshunds make horrible jogging companions. They would most often prefer to stay home in bed.. That leads to pudgy tummies and back problems later in life. Play with your puppy. Socialize it well. Stimulate its mind with a variety of games and enrichment items. Most of all, keep your dachshund active!

## Puppy Tips

Eukanuba recommends brushing puppy's teeth even though it won't keep those teeth from falling out. It will acclimate the puppy to brushing while it's old enough to put up a fight!

Petvethospitals.com suggests creating a confined area for your puppy. This should be its primarily living space until it is potty trained. Dachshunds often take longer than other dogs to potty train. Initially, you should use newspaper on the floor for your puppy to eliminate its waste. Also make sure to clean up waste quickly and thoroughly. The puppy must not learn it's acceptable to use the floor! Crate training may also help with potty training.

Don't respond to the puppy when it's whining or barking unless the puppy is panicked or panicking; otherwise, puppy is learning how to make YOU come to it.



## Pros

Dachshunds are clownish, stubborn dogs with spirits and minds that are bigger than their bodies. They're great with kids, loving, good natured (long haired dachshunds are said to have the calmest personalities, and I

have found this to be true). They also make excellent hunters and watchdogs. They're also very endearing!



## Cons

Note, the pros are shorter than the cons. I want to make sure you know what you're getting into. Many animals end up in shelters due to impulse buys or owner mistakes. It's very rarely the animals' faults. To minimize the latter, pick your pup carefully. It's a lifetime commitment.

Dachshunds have several potential health issues. They are prone to spinal disc problems. Watch their weight! I can't stress this enough. They can also develop heart disease, epilepsy, urinary tract problems, and diabetes.

Be prepared for barking. Lots of barking and attempts to play guard dog. If you're consistent and disciplined, you can discourage barking in your puppy. Libby barks at everything. She's a "talker"; however we recently adopted an elderly dachshund who is very quiet, so you may get lucky!

## Parting Thoughts..

Dachshunds make excellent companions but like any dog, they require your guidance. If you're consistent, firm, and patient you'll soon find your puppy is a well behaved member of the family. If you experience trouble, don't give up. One of the benefits of an unruly dachshund is that they are still a very small. On a more serious note, if you're consistent and committed, you and your puppy will reap the rewards. Enjoy your new pet!

Special thanks to Eukanuba and the people at petvethospitals.com for the useful information provided in this article.

**"If you're consistent and committed, you and your puppy will reap the rewards"**

